

WASHINGTON

REPLACEMENT NEEDED

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Sen. William Fulbright of Arkansas is a man of many parts: courtly Southern gentleman, lawyer, university president, Rhodes scholar, writer on international affairs, prestigious chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. But one of the parts no longer fits and should be replaced.

The part that rattles is his chairmanship. The time has come when, in fairness to himself, to the Senate and to the country, he should surrender it to someone who can fill it with the dignity, wisdom and effectiveness Fulbright himself once brought to this highly important position. This would free him to indulge the peevishness that characterizes his recent performance. And it would free the government of the embarrassments he is constantly causing it.

As the junior senator from Arkansas, or even as chairman of some other standing committee, he could be as waspish as his apparently wounded vanity tells him to be. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, however, he speaks through one of the American Establishment's big megaphones and is heard around the world. To foreign auditors who don't fully understand our system, and to a lesser extent to those who do, the result is confusing and in the present war situation can be dangerously misleading.

ADVISE AND CONSENT

President Kennedy, when he was forming his Cabinet, considered Fulbright for Secretary of State but chose Dean Rusk, another Southerner, instead. The reason generally ascribed for this was that Fulbright's miserable civil-rights record was too conspicuous. Fulbright accepted this in good part. If he was miffed, he didn't show it. He was regularly consulted about State Department policy decisions and appointments as the principal Senate adviser and consenter.

His advice wasn't always taken although, in the case of the Bay of Pigs adventure, it should have been. He counseled strongly against it. His warning, widely advertised after the event, was fully acknowledged.

In 1964, Fulbright campaigned in Arkansas and carried it for Lyndon Johnson. But when the dust had settled

Georgia, who had refused to campaign and whose state had been carried by Goldwater, who was invited to the ranch to celebrate. Things have been going from bad to worse in the Johnson-Fulbright and Rusk-Fulbright relationships ever since. This is understandable but unfortunate.

After first sponsoring the legislation that made the Vietnamese escalation possible, Fulbright became chief critic of the war and everything connected with it. He tried to bully Rusk at Senate hearings but was overmatched. He was bitterly critical of President de Gaulle, but when the French all but joined the enemy camp he began to detect virtue in the Gaullist philosophy.

WANING INFLUENCE

Now he has taken to using his committee room as a platform for denunciation not only of U.S. foreign policy but of U.S. friends. After a recent committee hearing on the Katzenbach nomination, he suggested that President Marcos of the Philippines, a valued ally in the Magsaysay tradition, had come to Washington for a reward—a bribe, in effect. "I thought Marcos was well paid for his visit, didn't you?" he sneered.

This was a gratuitous insult both to Marcos and to his country. It was, of course, duly noted in Manila, Hanoi and Peking. So have been other of Fulbright's sputterings. No wonder there is still a feeling in Asia that America's resolution is brittle.

Fulbright grumbles that the Senate's advisory capacity has been reduced to form, without substance—that wars are undeclared and treaties outmoded. There is something to this. But it has been going on for a long time and didn't seem to bother him until his own influence waned.

Once when President Truman lost heavily to the Republicans in a midterm Congressional election Fulbright drew on his knowledge of Britain to observe that under its parliamentary system Truman would have resigned in favor of his Republican Secretary of State in the interests of responsive and responsible government. (Truman riposted: "What this country needs is more land-grant colleges.") The same principle would now justify

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